



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL HOSPITAL

BOX 788250

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIFORNIA 92278-8250

IN REPLY REFER TO:

NAVHOSP29PALMSINST 5420.5D

Code 0300

7 February 1997

### NAVAL HOSPITAL TWENTYNINE PALMS INSTRUCTION 5420.5D

From: Commanding Officer

Subj: ESTABLISHMENT OF BIOETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Ref: (a) NAVHOSP29PALMSINST 6320.92B  
(b) NAVHOSP29PALMSINST 6320.71A  
(c) Joint Commission of the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, Accreditation Manual for Hospitals (Current Edition)  
(d) NAVHOSP29PALMSINST 6320.5A  
(e) OPNAVINST 5420.27J  
(f) NAVMEDCOMINST 5420.3

1. Purpose. To establish the composition, policies and procedures of the Naval Hospital Bioethics Review Committee.

2. Cancellation. NAVHOSP29PALMSINST 5420.5C.

3. Background. Pursuant to references (a) through (d), the Bioethics Review Committee is established to provide a formal forum to discuss and decide upon ethical issues in general and "DO NOT RESUSCITATE" (DNR) orders in particular. Opinions and recommendations are not directive in nature and are rendered solely to aid in the decision-making process. This committee is established in accordance with the guidance set forth in references (e) and (f).

4. Composition. The Bioethics Review Committee shall be comprised of the Director, Medical Services, appointed by the Commanding Officer, who shall act as Chairman, and the following diverse-background members.

- a. Representative from Mental Health department
- b. A Chaplain Corps Officer
- c. A Judge Advocate General Corps Officer (provided by the Staff Judge Advocate, MCAGCC)
- d. Head, Patient Administration Department
- e. Representative from Nursing Services Directorate
- f. Command Patient Contact Coordinator

5. Policy

a. Advancements in medical science continue to present moral, ethical, and medicolegal questions. Public awareness, the sensitivity of these issues, and Command responsibility require appropriate means be established to identify, address and promptly resolve these concerns. Reference (a) directs that all patients will be provided the opportunity to participate in developing advance directives regarding their future care and their right to accept or refuse treatment should they become incapable of making healthcare decisions for themselves.

b. Deliberations by the Committee are privileged and are not subject to release to the public. Additionally, patient information used by the Committee shall remain confidential under the Privacy Act and applicable state laws.

6. Action

a. Bioethics Review Committee shall:

(1) Request or permit ad hoc members.

(a) A lay person who is an eligible beneficiary of the military healthcare system may be selected.

(b) Participation by other members of the Command or community may be requested on an ad hoc basis, if that individual's experience or training will contribute to the deliberations.

(2) Act as a consulting body for physicians' other hospital staff members, patients and their families in all matters with ethical implications, such as refusal of treatment, withholding or withdrawal of life-support systems, organ donation, biomedical research and other matters of this nature.

(3) Act as an advisory and review committee on matters relating to DNR orders or other ethical issues. The Committee's consensus will be presented as an advisory recommendation, recognizing that the ultimate responsibility in such matters rests with the patient, the patient's family and the attending physician

(4) Review all DNR orders. Write a entry in the record notifying the physician who wrote the order of the compliance or noncompliance of the order within the provisions of reference (b).

(5) Counsel physicians, patients, members of a patient's family, or hospital staff members who request assistance regarding bioethical issues of treatment decisions having ethical implications such as:

- (a) Refusal of treatment.
- (b) Withholding of or withdrawal of life support systems.
- (c) Donating organs.
- (d) Conflicts between therapeutic research and educational priorities.
- (e) Or other such matters as may properly come before it.

(6) Recommend guidelines for the routine application of good bioethical procedures for decision making.

(7) Sponsor and conduct inservice education programs designed to inform hospital staff on ethical issues inherent in the practice of medicine.

(8) Meet at least quarterly to discuss bioethical matters and plan inservice education programs for the hospital staff or more frequently to review DNR orders.

(9) Convene within 24 hours of receipt of a "Request for Review" of a bioethical issue or decision. On weekends or holidays the committee will convene on the next working day.

(10) Maintain committee meeting minutes which summarize deliberations and record the recommendations. Minutes will be routed to the Executive Officer and Commanding Officer. The Board of Directors who will also receive a quarterly report of issues being reviewed and number of cases that were reviewed.

(11) Track all hospitalized patients with DNR orders in their charts.

(12) Maintain a file ("case record") on each patient with DNR orders in their charts. This file should include:

- (a) A summary of the patient's medical situation.
- (b) A summary of the opinions of the physicians and others consulted.

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(b). (c) The assessment of compliance with reference

(d) The minutes of the Bioethics Review Committee dealing with the case.

(e) And the committee's written recommendations.

b. Chairman or a member of the Bioethics Review Committee (Medical Corps or Nurse Corps) shall:


(1) Review all DNR ("No Code") orders and progress note entries in cases of competent, non-pregnant patients within 24 hours.

(a) Make a progress note entry of the review if the order is in compliance of reference (b).

(b) Submit the DNR Report to the Chairman for discussion at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

(2) Refer cases of a patient who is incompetent, pregnant, or in which there is any question or disagreement by the patient, member of the patient's family, or member of the healthcare provider team for review to the Bioethics Review Committee. This review must be within 24 hours as directed in paragraph 6a(9) of this instruction.

c. Attending Physician shall expeditiously notify the Chairman of the Bioethics Review Committee of the institution or discontinuation of DNR orders.



R. S. KAYLER

Distribution:  
List A  
All providers